

Native Americans and Asthma

IN NORTH CAROLINA

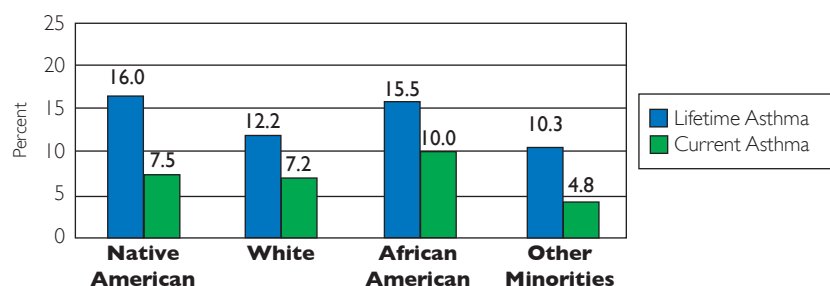
North Carolina has one of the largest Native American populations in the country. Native Americans in North Carolina were more likely to report being in poor health (13.1%) and more likely to report being unable to see a doctor in the past year due to cost (23.8%) than whites (5.8% and 14.2%, respectively).¹

In North Carolina, Native American adults are disproportionately affected by asthma.

- About 16.0% of Native Americans have ever had asthma (lifetime asthma), compared with 12.2% of whites, 15.5% of African Americans, and 10.3% of Other Minorities*.²
- Among adults who still currently have asthma (current asthma), the percentages are: Native Americans – 7.5%, whites – 7.2%, African Americans – 10.0%, and Other Minorities* – 4.8%.²



Adults with Lifetime and Current Asthma, by Race, North Carolina, 2010



Source: State Center for Health Statistics, N.C., 2010.

*Other Minorities includes Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander, and Other Races

Ten key tips to controlling and managing asthma⁵

1. Visit your doctor every six months, even if you think your asthma is under control.
2. Be sure to use your asthma medicines correctly.
3. Always use a holding chamber (or spacer) with your metered dose inhaler.
4. Make sure you always have access to your asthma medicines.
5. Get a written asthma action plan from your doctor. Make sure you understand it and have it updated at least every year.
6. Know what triggers your asthma and how to avoid conditions that may trigger an attack.
7. Ask your doctor about tests to determine if you have allergies to specific triggers.
8. Avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.
9. Ask your doctor about testing your lung function (spirometry) at least every 1-2 years.
10. Be sure you get a flu shot every year (available in the fall).



State of North Carolina | Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor
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Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary
Division of Public Health | North Carolina Asthma Program
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- Native Americans reported **more⁺ asthma attacks/episodes** than other racial/ethnic groups – 65.1% compared to 49.6% for whites and 42.9% for African Americans.³
- Among adults who have ever had asthma, **more⁺ Native Americans** (37.8%) than their African-American (34.9%), Hispanic (33.3%), White (29.8%), or counterparts reported that their general health status was only fair or poor.⁴
- Among adults who have ever had asthma, Native Americans (33.9%) had the **highest rate⁺ of current smokers** compared to their White (29.2%), African-American (24.9%), or Hispanic (19.9%), counterparts.⁴

¹ Health Profile of North Carolinians: 2009 Update, North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics (May 2009).

² Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (NC BRFSS), North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (2010).

³ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (NC BRFSS), North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (2008).

⁴ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (NC BRFSS), North Carolina State Center for Health Statistics, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (2005-2008).

⁵ Asthma Fact Sheet. (www.betterasthmacare.org/files/AsthmaFactSheet_V5_102909.pdf). Accessed December 21, 2009.

⁺ The 95% confidence intervals for the groups' percentages in these comparisons overlap; therefore, no statistical difference between these groups should be assumed.

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For more information, please visit
the NC Asthma Program's website
at **www.asthma.ncdhhs.gov**
or call the Asthma Program
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for additional assistance.